

From: zircon@interlink.or.jp@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 11:04am
Subject: Microsoft settlement

Dear Sirs,

I've followed the Microsoft trial from its beginning. It is clear from the testimony even to a layman that Microsoft does not respect the law or the judicial system. The proposed settlement leaves enough room for them to continue protecting their desktop monopoly through predatory practices, and to use it to try to extend it to the server and communications fields as well.

I work as a consultant, and have over the years seen many technically superior products fall by the wayside after Microsoft entered the field. The consumers ultimately pay for this - even the small minority who run on other platforms.

The quickly dwindling individuals and businesses that still rely on "alternative" operating systems need to spend increasing amounts of energy to maintain compatibility with the "mainstream." New Microsoft products use data formats that differ enough from previous versions to make it difficult for existing applications to exchange data with them. Since Microsoft frowns on the use of its development tools and information for non-Windows products, and since this information is necessary to make the products work on Windows, it becomes increasingly difficult for developers to build or maintain products for any other platforms - especially since the Windows market is the most profitable.

At this stage, excluding specialty fields, the "alternative" platforms have become small enough that mere removal of artificial barriers is no longer sufficient to resuscitate choice in the marketplace. The number of commercial OS/2 developers has declined to a handful, and BeOS, and Amiga, for example, are no longer available.

I sincerely hope for the future of the industry that the current proposal for settlement will be rejected, and effective measures will be taken to ensure that open competition, innovation and development will once again become possible.

Yours,

Teijo Kaakinen
zircon@interlink.or.jp

